United Nations A/69/6 (Prog. 22)

General Assembly

Distr.: General
25 February 2014

Original: English

Sixty-ninth session
Item 134 of the preliminary list*
Programme planning

Proposed strategic framework for the period 2016-2017

Part two: biennial programme plan

Programme 22
Palestine refugees

Contents

	Page
Overall orientation	2
Subprogramme 1. A long and healthy life	3
Subprogramme 2. Acquired knowledge and skills	4
Subprogramme 3. A decent standard of living	4
Subprogramme 4. Human rights enjoyed to the fullest	5
Legislative mandates	6

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Overall orientation

22.1 The United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East (UNRWA) was established within the United Nations system as a subsidiary organ of the General Assembly by the Assembly in resolution 302 (IV), from which the Agency derives its mandate to provide assistance to Palestine refugees. Since starting operations in 1950, UNRWA has adapted and enhanced its programmes to meet the increasingly complex needs of Palestine refugees and to provide them with a measure of protection and stability amid chronic conflict in the region, within available resources.

22.2 UNRWA reports directly to the General Assembly. Overall advice and support regarding Agency programmes and activities are provided to the Commissioner-General by the 28-delegation Advisory Commission, which includes representatives of the Agency's major donors and host Governments.

22.3 The mission of UNRWA is to help Palestine refugees achieve their full potential in human development under the difficult circumstances in which they live. In line with this mission, as part of its medium-term strategy for the period 2016-2021, the Agency will continue to address four human development goals: a long and healthy life, acquired knowledge and skills, a decent standard of living, and human rights enjoyed to the fullest, focusing on two particularly acute but related needs: a lack of enjoyment of human rights and transecting the intergenerational transmission of poverty. Progress towards those goals will drive UNRWA operations during the biennium 2016-2017.

22.4 Under the four goals, UNRWA aims to obtain its objectives by maintaining and improving the provision of education and health services, relief and social support, microfinance services, infrastructure and camp improvement within refugee camps, and protection, for the benefit of registered Palestine refugees in Jordan, Lebanon, the Syrian Arab Republic, the West Bank and the Gaza Strip, a population that is projected to reach 5.7 million by 2016.

22.5 The Agency also provides emergency assistance to more than 1.3 million Palestine refugees in acute distress as a result of armed conflict in the occupied Palestinian territory and more recently in the Syrian Arab Republic. UNRWA will continue to provide such services, as necessary, as well as, on an exceptional and temporary basis, services to non-refugees currently displaced and in serious need of continued assistance, as mandated by the General Assembly in resolution 2252 (ES-V) and, most recently, in resolution 68/77.

22.6 UNRWA will also continue its efforts to mainstream protection and a gender perspective into its activities, including with a view to meeting the needs of Palestine refugee children, persons with disabilities, youth and other vulnerable groups. These efforts will bring the Agency closer to fulfilling its obligations under relevant resolutions of the General Assembly, including paragraph 13 of resolution 67/78, the Beijing Platform for Action, the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women, the Convention on the Rights of the Child, the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities and other applicable international instruments.

22.7 UNRWA is almost entirely dependent on voluntary funding to implement its programmes. It has contended with chronic funding shortfalls and acute funding

uncertainties induced by economic and political volatility. The Agency will continue to seek the additional resources that it needs to sustain and improve the quality of the services it provides to refugees, while maintaining cost-conscious management and the operational flexibility required to respond to unforeseen disruptions to lives and livelihoods in Palestine refugee communities.

Subprogramme 1
A long and healthy life

Objective of the Organization: To protect, preserve and promote the health status of Palestine refugees

Expected accomplishments of the Secretariat	Indicators of achievement
(a) Universal access to quality, comprehensive primary health care	(a) Low antibiotic prescription rate maintained
(b) Protection and promotion of family health	(b) Percentage of women attending at least four antenatal care visits maintained
(c) Prevention and control of diseases	(c) (i) Immunization coverage rate against vaccine-preventable diseases maintained
	(ii) Percentage of shelters connected to the public water network maintained
	(iii) Increase in the percentage of shelters connected to the public sewerage network

Strategy

22.8 The strategy in attaining the objective includes:

(a) Fully implementing the Family Health Team approach for the provision of comprehensive primary health-care services;

(b) Maintaining the quality and efficiency of primary health-care services with an emphasis on preventing chronic diseases to meet the evolving needs of refugees;

(c) Expanding strategic partnerships to maintain the provision of and access to health services, particularly for those with specific health-care needs;

(d) Integrating a gender-responsive approach into services to increase access to vulnerable groups and those with specific health-care needs;

(e) Sustaining acceptable environmental conditions in refugee camps through immunization programmes, disease surveillance and response, and the maintenance of water and sewerage networks, either directly or in collaboration with municipal partners.

Subprogramme 2
Acquired knowledge and skills

Objective of the Organization: To meet the basic educational needs of Palestine refugees, in particular children and youth, and to improve their educational opportunities

Expected accomplishments of the Secretariat	Indicators of achievement
(a) Universal access to basic education	(a) (i) Reduced dropout rate of pupils in the elementary education cycle (ii) Reduced dropout rate of pupils in the preparatory education cycle
(b) Improved educational quality and outcomes against set standards	(b) Increase in the mean score obtained by students in the monitoring of learning achievement tests

Strategy

22.9 The strategy in attaining the objective includes:

(a) Ensuring continued universal access to quality basic education, including the maintenance of full gender parity;

(b) Fully implementing the UNRWA education reform strategy at three levels:

- Policy: establish an enabling environment for a quality, efficient, effective and equitable education programme
- Organizational: establish strategies and structures to realize policies
- Individual: build the capacity of education staff towards ensuring quality education for all children

(c) Strengthening research towards evidence-based policymaking and decision-making;

(d) Further harnessing the potential of partners.

Subprogramme 3
A decent standard of living

Objective of the Organization: To improve the standard of living of Palestine refugees through services provided to the poor and vulnerable

Expected accomplishments of the Secretariat	Indicators of achievement
(a) Reduced poverty among the poorest Palestine refugees	(a) Increased percentage of abject poor among the beneficiaries of the UNRWA social safety net programme

(b) Sustained access to employment for Palestine refugees	(b) Female and male employment rates for graduates within 12 months of graduation maintained
(c) Substandard camp infrastructure and accommodation upgraded	(c) Increased number of refugee families living in rehabilitated shelters

Strategy

22.10 The strategy in attaining the objective includes:

(a) Employing a multi-dimensional poverty-based approach to improve the targeting and coverage of services to help the poorest refugees meet their basic needs;

(b) Strengthening partnerships and improving the internal coordination of the social safety net and emergency programmes;

(c) Building inclusive self-sufficient financial systems that serve the most vulnerable by broadening the microfinance outreach and diversifying the product range;

(d) Helping refugees, especially vulnerable groups, gain access to productive and decent jobs through improved vocational and technical training that better meets labour market demands;

(e) Rehabilitating critically substandard shelters, targeting the most vulnerable refugees as a priority, and bringing the worst shelters up to minimum standards.

Subprogramme 4
Human rights enjoyed to the fullest

Objective of the Organization: To safeguard and advance the rights of Palestine refugees

Expected accomplishments of the Secretariat	Indicators of achievement
(a) Increased awareness and respect for the rights of the Palestine refugees	(a) Increased percentage of UNRWA written interventions on rights issues that received positive responses from the authorities
(b) Rights, safety and dignity of Palestine refugees promoted and protected	(b) Strengthened degree of mainstreaming of UNRWA protection standards in service delivery
(c) Palestine refugee status and eligibility to UNRWA services protected	(c) Percentage of new inscriptions meeting UNRWA standards maintained

Strategy

22.11 The strategy in attaining the objective includes:

(a) Integrating gender- and rights-based activities into interventions through mainstreaming and initiatives targeted at women, children, persons with disabilities, youth and other vulnerable groups;

(b) Systematically addressing specific rights violations with relevant authorities, as appropriate;

(c) Bilateral and multilateral advocacy on behalf of Palestine refugees and for compliance with relevant aspects of international law;

(d) Systematic tracking of and follow-up on protection cases referred to the Agency, directly or through referrals to partners;

(e) Implementing human rights policy and teacher training to strengthen teaching and learning in UNRWA schools;

(f) Implementing the Agency protection policy and standards throughout programming and service delivery;

(g) Ensuring that UNRWA policies setting out standards for processing registration uphold international standards.

Legislative mandates

General Assembly resolutions

302 (IV)	Assistance to Palestine refugees
2252 (ES-V)	Humanitarian assistance
2656 (XXV)	Establishment of the Working Group on the Financing of the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East
3331 (XXIX) B	United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East
68/76	Assistance to Palestine refugees
68/77	Persons displaced as a result of the June 1967 and subsequent hostilities
68/78	Operations of the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East